

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are pending in the application.

The applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claim 4 contains allowable subject matter. By way of this amendment, claim 4 has been placed in independent form.

In addition, the applicants appreciate the Examiner's consideration of the information cited by applicants in their Information Disclosure Statement of May 17, 2004. For the Examiner's information, copending applications 10/798,784, filed March 12, 2004, and 10/704,556, filed November 12, 2003, relate to similar subject matter.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under § 102(b) as being anticipated by Moriuchi. Claims 1-3 stand rejected under § 102(b) as anticipated, or under 103 as obvious, based on Miyata.

By way of this amendment, the claims have been amended to further define the invention. It is respectfully submitted that the amended claims are clearly patentable for at least the following reasons.

Moriuchi does disclose a system which can be used for sensing blood pressure. However, this system does not include an introducer assembly or an introducer. Item 24 is a tube which is connected to a catheter, as discussed in col. 5, lines 31-32 of Moriuchi. The tube 24 is an extension of catheter 26.

The description in Moriuchi pertains to a situation which occurs after instruments, such as an introducer, a guide wire, and a needle, have been used and removed. At such a time, the blood vessel would have already been located and the catheter introduced into the blood vessel.

In contrast to Moriuchi, the present invention relates to a system which is used during the introduction part of the procedure; in other words, prior to the situation described in Moriuchi. Independent claim 1 recites an introducer assembly. This terminology has been clarified to the term "introducer." As indicated in the attached excerpt from Stedman's

Medical Dictionary, an introducer is an instrument which is used to introduce a flexible device. Thus, tube 24 of Moriuchi is not an introducer because it is not used to introduce another device. The present inventors have realized that a pressure sensor capable of measuring the pressure at the distal end of an introducer can be useful to measure blood pressure during the introduction procedure.

It should also be noted that a catheter pressure transducer is generally used with a fluid other than blood as a medium because blood will coagulate. This is expressly described in Moriuchi at col. 1, lines 45-47 and also in col. 9, lines 42-53. Independent claim 1 has been amended to clearly recite that blood is the medium to further distinguish the claimed invention from Moriuchi.

Similarly, regarding the Miyata patent, the balloon catheter 20 of Miyata is not an introducer, but instead is a device which is introduced into the vascular system via an introducer. Similarly, although not expressly described in Miyata, one of ordinary skill in the art would understand that the inner tube 30 would generally be filled with saline (or other fluid other than blood) because otherwise such a long thin tube would be clogged up due to coagulated blood. It is thus believed that the amended claims clearly distinguish the invention from Miyata.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

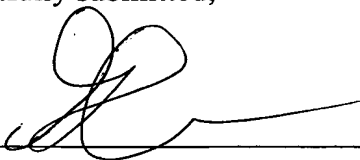
The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of

papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R.
§ 1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date 7/12/05

By 

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